

Shutesbury Emergency Management Team VIRTUAL Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 16, 2020

Members Present: Emergency Management Director (EMD) Walter Tibbetts, Assistant Emergency Management Director (Asst. EMD) Mark Foster, Select Board Chairperson Melissa Makepeace-O’Neil, Select Board Member April Stein, Board of Health Member and Shutesbury’s representative to the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition (MAPHCo), Norene Pease, Emergency Operations Center Ham Radio Operator (EOCHRO) Aaron Addison, Public Information Officer (PIO) David Perlmutter, Town Clerk Grace Bannasch, Town Administrator “Becky (Rebecca Torres and Team Secretary Leslie Bracebridge, recording.

Virtual Meeting ID: 863 4288 2843 Passcode: mw0ujn Dial-in #: 646 558 8656 Dial-in Passcode: 276164

1. Introductions – EMD Tibbetts:

- a. Welcomed all members back from the COVID-19 hiatus, last meeting was February 10, 2020, with a regional table-top exercise on March 2, 2020, right before all public gatherings went into a progressive “lockdown.”
- b. Emergency operations have continued, adapting to an ever-changing public health landscape. EMD Tibbetts recognized the exceptional efforts of Shutesbury’s Board of Health during this time.
- c. Wendell RD resident David Perlmutter, has been appointed as Shutesbury’s Public Information Officer. He has an extensive professional background in the newspaper business and in public relations.

2. The minutes of the February 10, 2020 meeting were reviewed, and approved as written.

3. FFY 2020 EMPG (Emergency Management Preparedness Grant) - EMD Tibbetts:

- a. The grant was submitted at the end of October with the necessary signed documents from the Select Board. EMD Tibbetts worked with Town Treasurer Mailloux to register the Town of Shutesbury in a new federal government entity (SAM.gov System for Award Management) which was slowing down the application completion process. Registration with SAM.gov needs to be finalized.
- b. Franklin County police, fire, emergency medical services and dispatch communications are outdated, and no longer supported. Working through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) Emergency Preparedness Program, Franklin County regional emergency communications services are in the process of migrating to the state’s emergency communication system, Commonwealth of Massachusetts Interoperable Radio System (COMIRS). The Massachusetts Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS) has already made upgrades to COMIRS to accommodate Franklin County users.
- c. While EOTSS will cover initial migration costs, including radio equipment for emergency responders (in the amount of \$76,000+ for Shutesbury alone), up-grades and some things are not covered. The FFY 2020 EMPG is a good fit for those items not covered. Items to be purchased with the EMPG funds include spare batteries, remote (shoulder) microphones, and DC chargers for emergency vehicles.
- d. User fees for the state-run COMIRS will be established in a few years in keeping with user fees which towns have contributed up until now to support the outdated regional radio system. The radio communications system will be run by the state meaning no vendor fees or “headaches” at the local level.

4. Code Red phone notifications system next steps – EMD Tibbetts:

- a. Overall, Code Red has proved to be a better fit for Shutesbury than Black Board Connect, though the reports are showing a lot of “errant numbers.”
- b. The town was still installing broad band into households when the switch was made to Code Red, this was followed by the COVID pandemic; we are due to a test to get rid of “errant #’s.
- c. A pre-test announcement will be made on the Town Announce system alerting residents to answer their calls during the test, giving officials accurate knowledge of which contact numbers are good.
- d. Residents will be encouraged to put the Code Red sending numbers into their phone contact directories so they will know, the calls are made to provide important emergency information.

- e. While Emergency response officials can assist with getting residents' contact information into the Code Red system, it is better and easier for residents to do it themselves, as a third party inputting the contact information, must know the cell phone number and carrier.
 - f. Residents are therefore encouraged to set-up their own "Managed Accounts."
 - g. Both Code Red and Black Board automatically put in new numbers, but neither takes the numbers out when people move away from Shutesbury.
 - h. EMD Tibbetts will contact Code Red to set up a test call.
5. **Locks Pond Road Culvert Replacement updates - EMD Tibbetts and TA Torres:**
- a. The Notice of Intent (NOI) has been finalized.
 - b. The next step is to finalize easements.
 - c. The request for bids will go out at the beginning of February.
 - d. The NOI for moving the seepage weir must be done separately from the culvert NOI. TA Torres will make sure that NOI to move the seepage weir is processed and approved.
 - e. The actual culvert replacement work is scheduled to begin in August of 2021.
6. **Reports of any Boards or Committees:**
- a. **Board of Health (BOH) member and Shutesbury's MAPHCO Representative Pease:**
 - i. COVID cases are on the rise, 66 new cases in Franklin County, since the beginning of the month. Franklin County remains 1 of the counties with the lowest number of cases.
 - ii. County-wide metrics are being used for the opening and closing of schools; health boards need to work directly with the school nurses and other members of the school community.
 - iii. Board of Health member Arleen Read is doing Shutesbury's MAVEN (Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network) reporting.
 - iv. Up-coming holidays: Don't get together in large in-home gatherings. FRCOG (Franklin Regional Council of Governments) has excellent posters, which Norene will get and distribute in public buildings, such as the post office.
 - v. Massachusetts State Police Chief Farnsworth has mandated that officers must wear masks from now on. Our local police will help by wearing masks and encouraging residents to wear masks.
 - vi. A practice drive-through EDS (Emergency Dispensing Site) occurred this fall. If EDS's are used, Shutesbury's will be one of the last, in spring to early summer. Syringes are being ordered. Norene recognized Emergency Operations Center Ham Radio Operator (EOCHRO) Aaron Addison for providing a battery charger to keep the printer running.
 - vii. The state will release a vaccination plan:
 - 1. Elders, nurses, and school personnel will be among the first to receive vaccinations.
 - 2. Town personnel will likely be called to a county distribution site.
 - viii. The Moderna vaccine has a 94.5% effective rate. State personnel are learning how hard it is to store the Pfizer vaccine at extremely low temperatures. The Pfizer vaccine can be held for 5 days without the extreme low temperatures. Both the Moderna and the Pfizer vaccines require 2 shots.
 - ix. The Board of Health is very pleased with their new shed, which is on location, where it will be used, at the elementary school grounds. Materials currently stored at the fire station, will be transferred to the "awesome" shed.
 - b. **TA Torres:** Thanked the Board of Health for their assistance in planning and running 2 town meetings and elections.
 - c. **Town Clerk Bannasch:** Added her thanks for Board of Health assistance monitoring the November election for safety, so she could focus on the election.
 - d. **Select Board Chairwoman Makepeace-O'Neil:** Also thanked the Board of Health and EMD Tibbetts, and Asst. EMD Foster for their public safety contributions at events throughout the pandemic, to which BOH member Pease summarized, "Incredible teamwork."

- e. **PIO Perlmutter:** Introduced himself as having a 28-year background in media at the Daily Hampshire Gazette, and requested patience as he becomes familiar with the Incident Command System. EMD Tibbetts will review various online training links with PIO Perlmutter.
 - f. **Asst. EMD Foster:** Reminder that new members of the Select Board and designated other officials need to certain basic Incident Command training courses, and provide their personal contact information to Asst. EMD Foster or EMD Tibbetts for their confidential file. This contact information is to be used for notifications in the event of an emergency.
7. **Any Other Old Business** – None.
 8. **New Business** – The Franklin Regional Council of Governments Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC) and the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition (MAPHCO) are planning to vote to merge into 1 group.
 9. **Next Meeting Date:** Monday, February 8, 2021 at 6:30 PM.
 10. **Voted to adjourn at:** 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted, as approved on February 8, 2021,

Leslie Bracebridge, Secretary

List of Documents used at the Meeting:

1. Emergency Management Team Meeting agenda for November 16, 2020.
2. Draft minutes of the February 10, 2020 meeting.